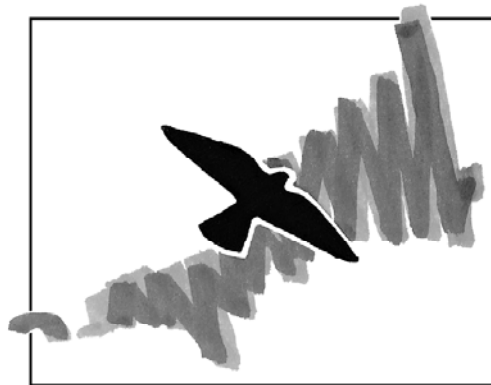


*A CHANNEL OF BLESSING
TO OTHERS*



REPORT OF THE
STRATEGY GROUP

APPOINTED BY THE BISHOP OF TRURO

CHAPTER 2
OF
THE PEOPLE OF GOD INITIATIVE

(approved for circulation to the clergy and parishes of the Diocese of Truro
for further study by the Diocesan Synod)

MAY 2005

Foreword by the Bishop of Truro

I want to begin by saying thank you to the members of the Strategy Group. They are all busy people involved in a host of different things. Over fourteen months they have met twelve times and have listened to many people and gathered information and, of course, discussed and probably argued among themselves. Thanks above all to Jeremy Dowling who is the Editor of the Report. The members of the Strategy Group and indeed the Bishop's Council owe him an enormous debt for the care and thoroughness for which he has carried out his task.

The Group was asked to look at where we had been, as a diocese, to reflect on the People of God initiative, to talk with those involved in different aspects of parochial and diocesan life, and to report back to the Bishop's Council. This they have now done. They have made some recommendations, which the Council accepted. Many of these, which can be found at the back of the Report, concerned work already in progress; others looked to the mid, and long term future. The Report went to Diocesan Synod, which received it by an overwhelming majority, and agreed that it should be more widely disseminated to parishes and all those directly involved in ministry. I must emphasise that this continues to be a discussion document; we need to be able establish priorities and a programme which the Diocese can own with imagination and enthusiasm.

The Report is essential reading for all of us. Please make sure to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest it. Make notes on it, think and pray about it. Let it mull in your mind. It is above all a working document, something that challenges and, we hope, stretches us, but it needs, and deserves, your own experience and thought and commitment if it is to do the job for which it was created. As I read it a modern parable, which came originally from Bishop Leslie Hunter, came into my mind. I share it with you hoping it may also help you as you read. Happy reading!

'As threats of war and the cries of the dispossessed were sounding in his ears, Western man fell into an uneasy sleep. In his sleep, he dreamed that he entered a spacious store in which the gifts of God to men are left, and addressed the angel behind the counter, saying, "I have run out of the fruits of the Spirit, can you restock me?" When the angel seemed about to say no, he burst out, "In place of war, afflictions, injustice, lying and lust, I need love, joy, peace, integrity, discipline. Without these I shall be lost." And the angel behind the counter replied, "We do not stock fruits, only seeds."'

+Bill

Strategic planning is not one of the strengths of the Church of England. The People of God Initiative, launched in 2001, was born out of the Bishop's prayerful discernment of what the Biblical story of the People of God was saying to the people of God in the Diocese today. Taking the long view from Genesis to the Exile, the Bishop drew parallels and raised questions about where the Church was after 2000 years of history. The Bishop deliberately called his booklet "*Towards a Theology of the People of God*" to initiate a debate, not provide answers.

Running through the booklet is the Bishop's engagement with the story of Abraham, the story of a journey from security to insecurity. "The call," the Bishop argued, "was *to* Abraham but *for* someone else and this is always the pattern of the call of God right through the Old Testament and New....It is a kind of theme tune of the People of God, which runs right through Scripture."

The Bishop offered his thinking "to help people in parishes to know that they are the People of God, and that they are to be a channel of blessing to others." This thinking has under-girded what has come to be known as the People of God Initiative. It runs through all the developments that have ensued. This report too is predicated on the theme that the People of God are to be a channel of blessing to others.

So, when the Bishop launched the People of God Initiative he took a pre-meditated real risk. He told his people that they were living beyond their means, and that this could not continue. The received message said simply 'We can no longer afford the current level of stipendiary priests.' The options were either to provide more funding to sustain numbers of stipendiary clergy, or to reduce them to an affordable level. A phased planned reduction in incumbent posts from about 120 to about 80 would take place over the next decade. Numbers of non-stipendiary clergy remained reasonably assured. At the same time, the Church would take steps to encourage people to come forward for training in liturgical, pastoral and teaching ministry. So there would be no actual reduction in the pastoral care which the Church was able to provide over the period to 2011. It would encourage an understanding of what it is to be Church, moving away from the culture where the priest alone was understood to represent Church-in-community, to a point where all the baptised recognised their potential for service.

The June 2001 launch of the People of God initiative was remarkably well received across the diocese. It was welcomed for its realism and the Bishop received strong encouragement for setting out the financial facts, and exciting possibilities for developing ministry. Four years later, Truro's example is seen as a useful way forward for others.

DIOCESAN STRUCTURES

Other changes were being planned involving careful consultation, and a clearly defined timetable. The Archdeacon of Bodmin's gifts brought a new sharpness and efficiency to diocesan administration, assuming that the numbers of stipendiary clergy to be deployed in future must be supported by the most cost-effective diocesan administration.

Originally it was thought that maximum representation from the parishes, on Diocesan Synod, would result in maximum involvement in decision making. In fact the old structures spawned large and unworkable boards and committees, with much overlap and repetition, most notably in the Bishop's Council and the Diocesan Board of Finance.

The Archdeacon's Group reviewed all diocesan structures, resulting in a reduced Synod, and smaller, effective, committees. At the heart of re-organisation lay a small Executive, combining the work formerly done by the Bishop's Council and the DBF. Policy decisions can now be made by a membership properly informed of the financial effects of its decisions. We now only embark on affordable policies which the Executive has properly assessed. If a strategic decision is essential to the developing mission of the diocese, funding must be made available to see it to completion.

This structural re-organisation, completed in time for the Synodical elections, has already made a remarkable difference to the life of the diocese. The smaller Executive numbers produces better-informed decisions and a degree of collegiality which helps to formulate policy effectively. The Diocesan Synod has already developed a new sense of direction, where more members express opinions reflecting considered, and far from conservative, views. The diocese owes a great debt of gratitude to Clive Cohen for the vision and determination, supported by the pastoral sensitivity and wisdom of Archdeacon Rodney Whiteman, with which the re-organisation of diocesan structures has been achieved.

At the same time, the appointment of Mrs Sheri Sturgess as Diocesan Secretary, made an efficient administration increasingly user-friendly and proactive. Subsequent Diocesan House appointments have resulted in further efficiencies from a mutually supportive team, whose work is rightly appreciated by the parishes. Much of the financial interface for the parishes in the recent past has been handled by Chief Accountant, Mr Michael Kent, who has long warned of the dangers which would follow if the diocese lived beyond its means. The Board of Finance is fortunate too, in the experience and

interpersonal skills which Gp Captain Paul Terrett brings to the role of Chairman of the DBF.

The recent review of the Common Fund formula has been welcomed, as has the increased commitment to Mission Resource funding. Pressure on Common Fund collection will increase, especially through uncertainty over the level of the Church Commissioners' grants. Investment strategy is being re-examined to support ministry in areas of need and opportunity.

LOCAL MINISTRY TEAMS

The reduction in incumbent posts is proceeding largely as envisaged, and deaneries are helping plan deployment of remaining stipendiary clergy. A major focus of the first phase of the People of God initiative has been the development of local ministry teams, both for pastoral care and outreach (Local Pastoral Ministry Teams) and to help lead worship (Local Worship Teams). The numbers being trained have far exceeded all expectations. Thanks to the drive and imagination of the Director of Training and Development, the Revd Paul Wignall, nearly 500 lay people were trained and commissioned by the end of 2004.

Such numbers are unlikely to be sustained in the future. Criteria for selection were sadly not always uniformly applied; in some parishes the PCC was closely involved in the selection; in others, decisions were more arbitrary. This might lead to some candidates being trained who did not possess the characteristics or skills required beyond the specifically local level.

The nature of the new pastoral ministries is intended to be local. Where 'local' occasionally means 'idiosyncratic' there could be a danger that the whole currency of local ministry is devalued. There is a real need to harmonise selection procedures, whilst recognising a potential for 'local interpretation'.

A bishop should always commission Local Pastoral Ministers and Local Worship Leaders, with a liturgy emphasising the relationship between the Bishop and the newly commissioned minister. When a priest is licensed, there can be no doubt about the nature of the relationship – 'Receive the cure of souls, which is both yours and mine'. As the Church's understanding of the call to local ministry widens, there should be increasingly tangible links between the Bishop and those who are commissioned to share some elements of his pastorate. Some concerns were expressed that local ministries should be better recognised by the wider Church. Commissioning services always take place in a local context, There is a need to explore the potential deployment of local ministers, across 'clusters' or loose groupings of parishes.

There is always a danger that Local Ministers feel isolated, especially in areas where few have emerged. The Group believes it would be useful to have at least one annual occasion when all involved in Local Ministry Teams come together at the Cathedral for a day of training and celebration as a public affirmation of their existence and significance to the Church.

Demand still outstrips the ability to supply training for Local Ministry. As patterns of ministry evolve, the Training and Development budget will need to increase. The age profile of those coming forward for Local Ministry is high, despite the variety of the training modules. Every encouragement should be given to those under forty to consider the possibilities of training.

CONFIDENCE

The Group carefully considered the whole issue of confidence. Widely differing perceptions of morale exist, and widely disparate views are held, depending on the involvement of the individual. Thus, a bishop may reasonably perceive morale to be high. The parish priest, who knows it is easier to enthuse parishioners to commit themselves to restoration rather than to mission, may see the future as worrying. Those who regularly worship know that their congregation is ageing, with few younger people replacing those whom death removes. However, morale is better than it was five years ago. A number of factors have created a feeling of well-being. Recent financial evidence has been encouraging, with improving returns of Common Fund. Nevertheless, all but a handful of parishes remain subsidised. We are becoming more dependent on 'living giving', suggesting that financial realism is beginning to dawn, and parishes are increasingly trying to plan constructively for their futures, in the light of projected reductions of the stipendiary clergy, and increasing numbers of LPMs.

CLERGY

Whilst at parish level morale may be said to be improving, there are some who claim that clergy morale is low. Following the initial welcome for the People of God initiative, a period of reflection led to much positive thinking emerging. Subsequently some clergy have felt threatened and in need of increased affirmation. This has been recognised by all concerned with ministerial training. Under Bishop Roy's chairmanship, 21 clergy, reflecting varied views, explored perceived clergy needs, and how these might be addressed by the diocese. It was important to recognise the difference between what the diocese thought the clergy *wanted*, and what the clergy themselves felt they *needed*.

As a result, a number of clergy Reflection Days took place, where all clergy, guided by skilled facilitators, reflected on their role and discussed their needs.

A Report on the Reflection Days was prepared for the Bishop's staff, and all clergy subsequently received a copy. Future strategic planning will take account of the Report's conclusions.

Clergy are understandably anxious about their future role. The way in which people see the church has dramatically changed over the past thirty years. Earlier generations believed in God, even if they did not go to church. Today, we have radically to change our mindset in the way in which we relate to the world. As numbers of clergy reduce, many fear that the demands on them will become impossible, and there are some who fear that the sense of isolation will increase. Larger deanery groupings may prove essential if the clergy chapter is to function effectively.

Clergy are also increasingly under stress from 'pressures of life and work'. There are concerns about pensions, marital wellbeing, loneliness, ill-health and, increasingly for some, self-doubt. **The age profile of the stipendiary clergy – average age 53 - increases these anxieties. Thirty-five of the present 118 stipendiary clergy may be expected to retire within the next five years, and a further thirty eight by 2014. Statistics for *all* licensed clergy follow the same overall pattern, and increasing numbers of clergy fear they may be unable to afford to retire when they had originally intended. Conversely, a number of early retirements are occurring due to ill-health and stress.

These are very real issues to clergy who see the landscape of ministry rapidly changing around them. Many clergy come from a training background which did not envisage the sharing of ministerial gifts with the laity. Whatever the changing hopes of clergy may be, it is hard to overcome the expectations of priesthood which the parish imposes. Thus priest and people can sometimes support each other in resisting changes in ministry, creating enclaves of isolation which effectively say 'Let others change; we will preserve our ways for our lifetime.'

In difficult times, it is relatively easy for clergy to question the faith which they have tried to live and preach throughout their ministry. Some may see their ministry as failing and they question the validity of preaching, pastoral ministry, or effectiveness within the community. Beyond this again lies doubt, to which all of us are prone, about the nature of God himself. There is an urgent need to address the loneliness, isolation and crises of faith which can assail clergy. Many of the developments in local ministry can also contribute to unease and depression and consideration needs to be given to supporting the changing role of clergy.

KEEPING THE RUMOUR OF GOD ALIVE

The Bishop increasingly reminds us that we live in a post-Christian, secular age, where the Church is marginalised by society, and we are challenged to 'Keep the rumour of God alive'. It is not that society does not need the Church, but the Church can clearly no longer say to the world 'Here we are: come and see'. We need to return to the more Celtic approach of the Church active in the community. The hope of the risen Christ is more effectively proclaimed when the church reaches beyond its walls, to touch the needs of people where they are.

In the recent outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease, with many churches closed for months, members ministered within community, and the Church was recognised as a powerful instrument of communication and practical ministry, often among complete strangers. Clergy were more used, and more aware of their communities' spiritual needs. The North Cornwall floods also emphasised that the Church can function effectively beyond the bounds of its buildings, especially to those who are not its habitual worshippers. Opportunities need to be developed where ministry can be exercised where people meet, away from the context of worship.

READER MINISTRY

We have also given careful consideration to the role and training of Readers. Insufficient thought was given initially to the way Reader ministry would be integrated into the training and deployment of Local Ministers, and this is to be regretted.

The Group received evidence of Readers' anxieties from their Warden, Mrs Gloria Helson. Many questioned their relationship to 'the new ministries'. Others are under-deployed, not regarded as members of the ministerial team, or, for a variety of reasons, choose to stand apart. If some clergy feel marginalised by the new patterns of ministry, the same applies to some Readers. We were concerned that there was little evidence of vision for the future. Readers now receive training through the Exeter Certificate in Theology with additional 'Reader Development Modules'. This has been developed by Revd Tom Pritchard as Director of Reader Training and should have a significant impact on the future. There is an urgent need for ongoing dialogue between those responsible for ministerial training and the new Warden once that appointment is announced.

We recognise the considerable work being done by Readers, and their evident sensitivities. **Numbers of Readers (133) and their age profile closely parallel numbers of clergy; eighteen Readers are in training, of whom eight are under

50. It is clear that the present worship patterns could not be maintained without them, but it is evident that there is a wide disparity of Reader practice. Many are primarily ministers of the Word, others enjoy some level of pastoral deployment. We urge that Readers be better integrated into other programmes of training – they have much to offer from their own experience, and at the same time may welcome new ideas.

INTEGRATED MINISTERIAL TRAINING

Overall, many excellent training initiatives are being undertaken. We welcomed evidence that implications of the Hind Report are being taken seriously by those responsible for training. Whilst regionalisation may bring some benefits, we note that others are interested in the integrated training being produced in Truro, with a view to learning from it. Paul Wignall's training material is now eagerly sought after within neighbouring dioceses, We are concerned that there have been occasions when each of the elements of training and development – including Continuing Ministerial Education, and Reader training – function with little active reference to each other. This leads to feelings of marginalisation and resentment; there is an urgent need for all involved in training to harmonise both practice and long term planning.

There is division of opinion as to the form which Continuing Ministerial Education should take, whether primarily academic or practical. CME should always help priests to develop their journey of faith; theological insight and reflective teaching is essential if a priest's horizons are to enlarge; no amount of time spent on the practicalities of priesthood could provide as much long term benefit. We feel that there should be a careful review of CME, to include the opinions of the Bishop's staff, in the light of the clergy response to their Reflection Days.

THE FUTURE OF THE DEANERY

It is increasingly evident that the traditional parochial system is not likely to survive. We welcome evidence that some deaneries far from being marginalised, are now increasingly at the heart both of organisation, and mission. The Church increasingly sees the deanery as the unit of growth and local management, and we support such thinking. Deaneries have responded well to the re-organisation of the diocesan structures; some are exploring boundary changes, of both parishes and deaneries. As they become more significant they should take an increasing part in budget setting. In the Audit and Advance questionnaire, (2001) deaneries were asked to assess priorities and resources, to determine future deployment. They are being encouraged to look at 'clusters' of parishes where a number of ministers can function. Ideally each should contain one co-ordinating stipendiary minister. Some such

clusters already exist and the informal process should be allowed to continue to develop gradually.

Recently, Rural Deans have been of increasing significance to both Deanery and the Bishop, who relies heavily on their pastoral insights and advice. Since 1877, clergy in Truro elect their Rural Dean. Elsewhere, the Bishop appoints, and we have recently moved towards such a position where the clergy elect and the Bishop confirms the election emphasising the confidence he has in his Rural Deans. An increasingly significant role will be played by Rural Deans, and it seems therefore sensible that the Bishop appoints those who are essentially his officers, without the pre-requisite of an election.

The Bishop meets regularly with Rural Deans, and lay Chairmen. As clergy come to terms with the changing patterns of ministry, more will be demanded of Rural Deans who are increasingly used by their colleagues as counsellors, advisers and confidants. The Rural Dean is under more pressure – from diocese, bishop, and clergy. Many Rural Deans have little idea of what the job can involve; often they are expected to acquire skills in response to circumstance. We feel that Rural Deans should receive specific training support for this role.

Just as ‘clusters’ of parishes are developing, we encourage deaneries to consider similar ways to exercise ministry. The role of the Deanery Synod needs to be explored as an imaginative and creative forum, which could help to revitalise the local church. We recommend the creation of a Working Party to examine the future role of the deaneries, and the role, responsibilities and relationship with the Bishop of the Rural Dean, and the synodically elected Lay Chairman.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

If the diocese is to be effective in its future ministry for the whole people of God, any strategic planning must take into account the strong presence of the Methodist Church, especially within the context of the Anglican-Methodist Covenant. There are currently twenty Circuits, and 256 active churches in the Cornwall District of the Methodist Church, a third of which are listed buildings. Their size and location is due in urban areas to the industrial growth at the time of their building, and the location of livestock markets in the countryside. From the 1851 census to the 1950s Methodism was said to be ‘the established Church in Cornwall’. In the 1950s there were 1,000 active Methodist churches, including three 1,000 seater buildings. In the mid-nineteenth century, Redruth was the second most wealthy parish in the country; in Wesley’s time St Just was bigger than Birmingham, In the last fifty years, the Methodist Church has

sold over 740 Cornish chapels; the diocese has declared redundant seven churches, of which one is a ruin.

One third of the Methodist Churches achieved Grade II or Grade II* status in the 1990s listings – a very mixed blessing. Like the C of E, the Methodist Church is pre-occupied with maintenance. Rationalisation of the use of buildings in the future is a matter of finance, and human resources. A local Methodist church needs six members to be a viable part of the Circuit; currently 9,000 members are on the rolls, average church membership is 35. There is at present a shortage of preachers. Some very small churches are technically non-active, and their future is in doubt.

Dr Christopher Blake, the Chairman of the Cornwall District reflected with us on Methodism in the county, and relations with the diocese. We are grateful for his insights into the sensitivity needed to encourage co-operation between Anglican and Methodist congregations in exploring shared buildings and joint projects. The Methodist Church is withdrawing from certain areas, with a continued reduction of ministers over the next five years. Increasingly some rural areas find that the ministerial coverage, by both Anglicans and Methodists is extremely thin. Both Churches should commit themselves to the practical implications of the Covenant, each with active representation in all appropriate bodies.

Growing together must evolve at the rate at which local feeling dictates. The close relationship between the Chairman of District and the Diocesan Bishop reflects the strength of the relationship that existed between their predecessors. Office provision in Diocesan House for Methodist District staff has been of practical help to both Churches. The Ecumenical Canonries at the Cathedral, the recent appointment of a Methodist, the Reverend Dr Stephen Dawes, as Canon Theologian, and the theological contribution of the present Chairman of District and his predecessors, have been of great value to both Churches. The Methodist Districts have no real power or major budget. The Chairman may encourage Circuits or Churches, but unlike the Bishop, he has no hierarchical significance.

This will mean very sporadic growth between the two Churches, at times delayed by a degree of conservatism on either side. Most recognise that extended dialogue, over years, achieves a better result than could occur by any 'fast-track' scheme. Where the will for co-operation exists, much can be achieved in a relatively short time, as at Dobwalls. The hope is that neither Church will close any of its buildings without consultation. We note that 'denominationalism' has largely declined, newcomers tending to go to the church which actively welcomes them.

CHURCH BUILDINGS

For the Methodist Church the key factor which influences the retention of buildings, is financial viability. If the income is insufficient for a ministry to be maintained, the building becomes redundant and it is put on the market. Methodist Chapels sell easily, readily converting to private housing. The process for disposing of an Anglican church is not so straightforward. To close a Grade I or Grade II* building is a complex process which may attract specialist interests causing lengthy delays. Objections may be raised, or the future proposed 'assured' usage may run into financial difficulties.

There are currently over 300 Anglican places of worship active in Cornwall. Few are not listed buildings. Collectively, they are in a better state of repair than at any time in the last five hundred years, thanks to the dedication of rather less than 10% of the population, and the relative generosity of English Heritage, The Heritage Lottery Fund and the Cornwall Historic Churches Trust, and a number of others. The HLF's priority for grants for high level works has effectively ensured that the majority of our churches are at least watertight, and secure for the remainder of this century.

For many, the church building can become an obsessional pre-occupation. Clergy and treasurers know that it is easier to raise funds for windows, towers, or bells than to bring about 'change'. Irregular churchgoers are conservative in what they expect to find when they do attend. They notice changes in architecture or liturgy – and the latter often takes time to be accepted by regular worshippers whose age profiles remain high. Costs of maintaining church buildings seem excessive to the outsider. Many assume that the Church exists only for churchgoers, when in fact it needs ceaselessly to be reminded of Bonhoeffer's words "The Church is only the Church when it exists for others." Churchgoers themselves question the time, energy and money spent on buildings. Ageing congregations wonder what will happen when they are gone, but lack the drive and vision to address their situation. Most dangerous of all is the culture which says 'So long as it sees me out.'

It is worth noting that the published level of parish reserves is currently over **£7m, (of which £4.75m represents unrestricted funds) which suggests a healthier financial state – in many parishes – than is sometimes believed. Such reserves are not evenly spread, and quoted figures do not necessarily include all funds available.

We can however, no longer evade decisions about the future of churches which are under-used and expensive to maintain. Should we therefore prepare

to close some more isolated buildings in tandem with the reduction in numbers of clergy?

We remain convinced that wholesale redundancy is *not* the answer. If the diocese is encouraging vocations for new patterns of ministry it clearly envisages the continued use of its buildings. This might however suggest little more than continuing the current pattern of worship; whilst the frequency of eucharistic worship might decline, and services of the Word increase, there is no expectation of growth.

In most Cornish villages, the church building remains a visible focus of the community, often the only place of sufficient size for more than 100 people. As social and economic pressures have increasingly influenced village life, schools, shops and rural post offices are under threat. So there is an increasing demand for secure premises which can be utilised on a daily basis; elsewhere the church already houses Post Office, Bank, library, as well as counselling services and childcare.

MAINTENANCE OR MISSION?

Priorities of maintenance do not promote mission. Growth, for many, seems unimaginable. Church leaders are increasingly worn down by their workload, and can become weary of the Lord's work, if not of the Lord himself. Talk of mission or evangelism simply depresses them further.

Yet there is a hunger for God. It is not necessarily expressed by going to church, or joining church based activities. We were stimulated by the Revd David White of St Austell, whose visionary ideas have encouraged church growth elsewhere. He argues that Christians should, above all, be able to show that they are normal. "We need to show by our humanity that God is good news, and that he wants to be intimately involved in our lives" is for him the heart of mission's beginning. This reflects Bishop Bill's view that we each have a history with God; sharing that history begins to attract others to accept the gospel message.

It follows that Christianity is as likely to be caught outside the church as within it. The church building may be a source of strength, or haven of peace to the churchgoer, but to the uninitiated it is often a totally 'other' environment. The church needs to see its buildings through strangers' eyes, to make them more welcoming than some have so far achieved. At the same time churches need to explore ways in which they can better serve the community's needs – especially if the building can be adapted to meet those requirements.

Already some churches are looking imaginatively at their buildings, which have increasingly to compete with other places where people wish to gather. With the active encouragement of the Chancellor of the diocese, the inspecting architects, and the DAC, some parishes are looking at more exciting ways in which the church building can conform to minimum requirements – mains water, toilets, kitchen facilities - for other public buildings; this has been accelerated by the requirements of recent disability legislation.

A CHANNEL OF BLESSING TO OTHERS

However if churches are to take their re-ordering seriously, in order to be a channel of blessing to others, it is essential that they first do an audit of existing community assets and needs which are not currently being met. Such an audit needs the active co-operation and interest of every functioning group in the community; the underlying questions have to tease out real needs, and the ways in which the Church, working with others, might help to address them.

A number of companies offer professional expertise in assessing the potential of ecclesiastical properties. We sought the expert advice of one, whose directors include clergy and others with experience of maximising the use of church buildings as a community resource. The use of outside consultants, with a working knowledge of church finances and politics, providing a feasibility and business plan leading to action, gives a sharper dimension to decision making. We strongly commend the use of such consultants, where appropriate, to assist parishes and diocese in assessing the best future use of their buildings.

An external consultant can help to identify examples of good practice, locally and in the wider church. What succeeds in another county will not necessarily work in Cornwall. A number of churches have reviewed their position when it may have looked bleak, and have subsequently transformed the building, and the worshipping life of the community, at the same time as enhancing its social structure by providing accommodation for non-church groups. St John's Delabole has become a new focus for community: the building is used, by diverse interest groups, five days a week. Increasing numbers of churches are making provision for parent and toddler groups, and several west country churches are converting the church into a dual-purpose building, especially relating to the village school. This occurs as a direct response to a community audit, where the Church asks of the community "How can we serve you?" The Group is of the view that *all* parishes should conduct a community audit, over the next six months. This audit would be devised and overseen by a group headed by the Director of Training and Development.

The theological approach encouraged by the People of God initiative – becoming a channel of blessing to others - should motivate such an audit. Thus parishes should not view themselves in isolation, but in the cluster or deanery context, looking at the resources which they possess or need and their most potentially successful deployment.

CHURCHES AT RISK

In conjunction with this, consideration should be given to the long term viability of those churches which are recognised to be ‘at risk’ because of location, population movement or declining numbers. Thus the diocese will obtain a fuller picture of all of its places of worship, seen through the eyes of local people, and where appropriate, of professional assessors. There are naturally cost implications in terms of time and viability, but this exercise, concerning churches whose future may be ‘at risk’ should be undertaken, over not more than two years, enabling a final report to be produced within three years.

Evidence suggests that there will be church buildings which are no longer viable as community places of worship. Factors conspire to create such possible redundancies, not least increasing mobility, and the migration of population, in pursuit of work. There are also church buildings which were created around the place where a Cornish saint originally established a cell, to which people came to hear the Word of God, and to receive the sacraments.

SACRED SPACES

These ‘sacred spaces’ are a unique witness to centuries of prayer. Their isolated location often helps to remind the visitor that God is often encountered in the silence when we can wait upon Him, uncluttered by the busyness of our lives. Such places are indeed ‘hallowed’ – set apart for God. In many cases the medieval churchtown has almost disappeared; a village has grown up two or three miles away, with a Methodist Chapel within it, at the heart of the new community. Should the Church abandon buildings whose construction and location underline a belief far less questioning than our own; or should we see such sacred spaces as continuing to be a resource even if that resource has to be re-interpreted in order to make it more financially viable? Churches are frequently described as ‘essays in stone’; an essay is meaningless to those who have not learnt to read.

There is increasing interest in the use of sacred space for retreats, quiet days and guided study, and for use by the performing arts. We welcome the particular contribution to the spiritual life of the diocese by such retreat houses as Shell Cottage, Hampton Manor, and Epiphany House. Several dioceses have already established resource bases within church buildings as part of the

development of spirituality, and the Bishop is currently exploring possible use of some more isolated churches in this way here. As part of the audit of church buildings, we would expect that consideration is given to the preservation and development of a number of 'sacred space' sites.

If such audits begin this autumn, reports could be expected during 2007. By that time, the diocese will be well advanced along the path to the anticipated reductions of stipendiary clergy. In addition, Paul Wignall is planning for five and ten-year growth in Local Ministry training. We anticipate that parish audits, supplemented by some professional advice, would have identified those churches for which additional community uses could be planned. A relatively small number of church buildings would be identified which were potentially redundant for church or community use. Of these, some would be significant sacred spaces to be developed accordingly. The Executive would receive such a report by autumn 2007, and Synod would debate its implications and the Executive's recommendations the following year.

A number of churches will be defined as 'redundant', and the normal processes leading to formal redundancy would begin. Without the audit suggested above, it is impossible to conjecture how many church buildings will be regarded as truly redundant.

Deaneries and parishes would have contributed such reports, reflecting their own observations about the future of their local church buildings. 'Church buildings' within the context of such audits would also include Church Halls and Parsonage Houses, the location and retention of some of which may become questionable. In the light of the Covenant agreement, consideration should include buildings of all denominations, using the same criteria. We recognise that it would not always be possible to implement desirable solutions immediately, but communities would attempt to agree a phased acceptance of locally appropriate proposals. We recognise 'Project 2000' the programme of improvements undertaken by the Diocesan Surveyor's department, and the number of premises retained on a 'house-for-duty' basis. The diocese is not, and has never been, in a position to act as a speculative investor in property.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF MINISTRY

If consideration is given to the medium term deployment of stipendiary ministers, projected numbers of non-stipendiary ministers, Readers and Local Ministers, and at the same time a detailed analysis of the future of church buildings is undertaken, what will have been achieved by 2011? Such an exercise, seen in isolation, would be of little more value than re-arranging the deckchairs on the Titanic. The wider message would speak of a defensive

church, seeking largely to maintain the *status quo*. The world would see smaller numbers of clergy, some redundant church buildings, and a number re-ordered for better community use. There would be more lay ministers, but the Church would still be seeking to provide full pastoral ministry, spread in a more varied way.

Service patterns of recent years will change in the future, with fewer priests and more local worship leaders. There will be a decline in frequency of eucharistic worship, and whilst some will regret this, for an increasing number of those who are not-yet-Christians, the eucharist represents a substantial barrier to be crossed. There continues to be a need to provide the eucharist, the central act of Christian worship, and it may be necessary for the Bishop to look further at the provision of communion by extension, especially in some sparsely populated areas. Increased training for local worship leaders may lead to more frequent, more innovative and imaginative services of the Word, which are generally more accessible to those making tentative approaches to the Christian faith.

LAY TRAINING FOR COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY

The People of God initiative has identified a surprising number of people wanting to explore ways of developing their Christian calling. Central to the lay training programme has been *The Learning Mosaic* that can be built up into a programme of training to meet the needs of a team, a parish or a cluster of parishes. All teams begin with a six module course called 'First Steps' introducing the essentials of worship or pastoral care, which start to establish the sense of being a team. 'Next Steps' modules provide ongoing training to meet the needs that the team has identified for itself. *The Learning Mosaic* is proving a powerful instrument for encouragement and change. Many who have undertaken initial training want to move forward to a more advanced level of skill.

Many lay people find it hard to discover the confidence to accept that they have skills to be ministers – that ministry is not just for the professionals, but is central to our calling as Christians. Lay people have been progressively de-skilled in many areas of Christian life, and have come to expect to *receive* ministry, rather than to *offer* it. Because so many have been excited by the possibilities of lay training, every opportunity should be taken to extend that challenge further.

Ordained ministers have to accept an element of re-training, notably in helping the priest to understand what the priest's role is in a church that is *collaborative* and a *partnership*. Whilst some other dioceses have progressed a considerable way in understanding collaborative ministry, Truro has not

seriously explored this option. The 'Reflection Days' have been welcomed, as an opportunity for clergy to have time away with colleagues to identify training needs and explore ways in which they can be supported in their new role. It is important that training for clergy and lay people should in future retain a careful balance, so that all can be equally supported as they explore their emerging patterns of ministry together.

If buildings are set aside, the greatest anxiety for many Christians concerns the future, and for those who are churchgoers, is often encapsulated in the question "What is going to happen when we're gone?" Setting aside the wag's response, that 'the Lord is good at raising up other seventy-year olds to take our place', the fear is that an ageing congregation will not be replaced as interest in religion declines. Decline, however, refers not so much to religion, as to church-going. Whilst language may change 'to attract the young', and music may adopt a less traditional idiom and services become more 'family based', neither young nor families flock through the doors, except when the church is able to reflect something of the public mood. This is most often concerned with rites of passage, or to commemorate the great Christian truths, often overlaid with elements of folk religion.

DESIRE FOR TRANSFORMATION

Is the Church satisfied with progressive numerical decline? Does it really desire to reverse that decline and produce a period of sustained growth? Nationally, there is clear, but patchy, evidence of desire for growth. The success, in many parts of the country, of the *Alpha*, *Emmaus*, *Credo* and *Christianity Explored* courses speaks of a willingness to reach out to those who are not-yet-Christians. Within this diocese, a number of parishes and individuals have gently tested the waters of such courses, either moving forward, on a parochial, and often excluding basis, or have decided that this development is not for them. Such courses clearly engage some in the wider community who want to encounter God, however loosely determined that wish may be.

The late David Watson, a considerable evangelist of his time, conducted a very successful Cornwall Mission in 1977. The ten day Mission, based on the Cathedral, was founded on the preparatory creation of scores of interdenominational prayer and Bible study groups across the county. It happened because of the desire of people within the churches to reach out to others across denominational boundaries. Many of those study groups persist in some form to this day; and many individuals experienced their first call to some form of ministry in the years immediately following the Cornwall Mission, which the Churches recognised as a powerful force for potential awakening, most notably in rural parishes.

After 1977 the diocese considered the need to encourage mission and evangelism, and the Cathedral post of Canon Missioner was briefly revived. Despite the efforts of the then Council for Mission and Unity, and its successors, 'mission' became marginalised, regarded as an optional extra, rather than an essential to church life and growth. Mission and Unity concerns subsequently became the specific responsibility of three clergy, who made efforts to interest the diocese in outreach, with patchy success.

More recently, the *Springboard* team was invited to visit the diocese, as a natural complement to the People of God initiative. Meetings were well attended, and particular interest was expressed by members of PCCs to training sessions, and particularly to suggestions contained in their '*Growing Healthy Churches*' course. *Springboard* produced an encouraging Report for the Bishop's Council indicating potential growth areas and identifying a number of concerns, but it clearly anticipated a more definite response than the Council felt ready to give. In the event, the diocese failed to respond to the suggestions for further action.

The *Springboard* Team found an apparent longing for transformation, both amongst clergy and lay people, and a feeling that maintenance ministry hung like a yoke around the neck of the local church. It could be argued that Paul Wignall's training programmes have capitalised on that hunger, and that to pursue the *Springboard* programme might have merely duplicated ideas which were being customised to the needs of the diocese through its developing training programme.

PATTERNS FOR GROWTH

We believe that the time is now right to move more firmly away from maintenance ministry to mission. This should emphatically not be seen as 'yet another thing' but one facet of Christian life which is essential if we are to become a channel of blessing to others. The Group invited the Revd David White, Vicar of St Austell since 1999, to prepare a paper on strategies for mission, and found his suggestions challenging and stimulating. His experiences of church growth in Toxteth, Liverpool, Chelmsford and St Michael le Belfrey, York, have led him to develop a strategy based on the understanding that 'Mission is who we are' rather than 'let's do a mission'.

David White believes that the diocese needs to develop a strategy for mission based on Sowing, Reaping and Keeping. He believes that as Christians we need above all to be able to show that we are normal, and able to demonstrate that God is good news and that he wants to be involved intimately with our lives. This, however, is not enough. The gospel content of our lives needs to

be shared, and that cannot be done without preparing the ground. Such preparing is done through processes, like the *Alpha* or *Emmaus* courses, (or indeed the *Learning Mosaic*) which allow not-yet Christians to see that Christians are good to know. Thus after Sowing and preparing the ground, and the Reaping of the courses, comes the Keeping – usually in small groups.

Like many others, David White believes the Church is meant to be a bird with two wings to enable it to fly more strongly. The first wing is with the congregation, and the second the small group. Both are needed because God is both transcendent and immanent. Within the congregation, hearts and minds are lifted above the concerns of daily life, to hear the Word of God and to receive the Eucharist, and to have vision enlarged. But we also need God to be intimate with us, to have a place where hopes and fears can be shared without ridicule. Here the small group comes into its own, where we can share our history with God. This is the place for evangelism, where people can see for themselves that God is good and we are all right. There are many reasons why people come to church – but only one reason why they stay, and that is relationships, better developed in the small group setting.

We responded very positively to David White's imaginative ideas concerning mission, and we think it is a priority to extend the Gospel message as far and as wide as possible. We have to be seen as a welcoming community that offers Christian love at many different levels, not just for the more sophisticated who understand the ins and outs of Christian worship. However, it is important to balance this welcoming approach with what may be considered a more prophetic voice in the community that may present challenges and, indeed, opposition to established opinions and practises. This does not automatically mean the Church speaking to itself on subjects such as homosexuality or women bishops, but on issues that have a wider social and global significance, like poverty and injustice. We should not be shy about lifting our heads above the parapet if the situation demands it. Mission must not mean saying 'yes' to everyone in all circumstances, but in occasionally saying 'no' if the Gospel requires it.

We were encouraged that David White's experience has indicated to him that the deanery is the best structure within which to grow the church. In line with the thinking of the Cray Report '*Mission Shaped Church*' he sees the deanery as the place where extra parochial places of worship (EPPs) might emerge, tying in with the network structure of much of today's society. Within the deanery, catholic, evangelical and charismatic Anglicans can all be encouraged to develop their own style in evangelism and pooling of gifts is easy. Within the deanery, the emphasis on teaching can be geared to 'felt

needs' – which exactly reflects the growth envisaged in Paul Wignall's training modules, which are steadily increasing in content and variety. In many ways, the *Learning Mosaic* is already becoming the vital step in reaching out in friendship to the wider community. David White also sees the possibility of a Minster model emerging in the deanery, as a recognised way of igniting mission.

It is clear that leaders of the 21st century local church will have to change the way they think, and alter their practices. At the same time, church congregations will need to be re-educated about what leadership involves. Today's church leader will have to change focus from trying to keep everyone happy, to equipping others to do some of the ministry he or she used to do.

The Church needs to return to the pattern of discipleship which Jesus used. Briefly, this involves being *called by Jesus*; *spending time with Jesus* and *being sent from Jesus*. Whilst this cycle was constantly repeated whilst Jesus was with the disciples, after he ascended, the Holy Spirit took on this role as the one 'who would lead them into all truth.' This remains the easiest and most effective way of discipling – built as it is upon work and relationship with him. It is a pattern based upon rest and work, reversing the usual pattern found today, when we only rest when we are exhausted. The Biblical way is always *to work from rest* – not the other way round, and this has implications for the way in which we do our mission. Whilst the Group was impressed by David White's suggestion that the church can learn much by reverting to the Biblical pattern of work from rest, which he has adopted successfully at St Austell, we recognised that there were also other models to be explored.

The Church needs to rediscover confidence in the gospel message. It is often said that 'if the Holy Spirit were to be taken away from the Church, 90% of what the Church does today would carry on as normal'. Within today's Church, there is little expectation of the empowering of the Holy Spirit. As we grow in confidence in our relationship with God, we may re-learn what it is to be the expectant Church. As we are prepared to share more of our history with God with others, so they will increasingly experience a hunger for him, and the Church will grow.

A DIRECTOR OF MISSION

So do we need another Cornwall Mission? Or a Mission to Cornwall? The Group's view is that mission has to begin with the individual. We are encouraged by the way in which lay people have already responded to the call for training, and clergy to ways of developing their ministry. We believe that the diocese needs to do more to make a firm commitment to move away from maintenance to growth, and that this will best be achieved by appointing

someone of vision and prayer, whose priority is mission, to a significant role within the diocese. The role of Director of Mission is different from that of Bishop's Officer for Evangelism; we recognise the considerable work done by Captain Gordon Banks in recent years, which will provide a useful foundation for the future. A Director of Mission, ordained or lay, would work closely with those responsible for training and development, building on the progress already made under the People of God initiative. It will therefore become critical for the diocese to develop an effective department of Mission and Training.

As the Group has continued its discussions, it has become clear that changes in attitude are taking place within the diocese, as a result of the Bishop's initiative, the appointment of a Director of Training and Development, and the re-structuring of the diocesan organisation. As more people become involved in the activity of the church, so their desire to see the church move forward from a maintenance ministry increases. *Mission Shaped Church* is not about buildings – it is about being counter-cultural, and will require time to be understood. We have, however, been impressed by the prayerful deliberations which appear to have preceded virtually all changes and developments in the past three years, and feel that future strategy must be supported by the prayer of the diocese.

PRAYER

We hope that the Revd Dr David Rake, the Bishop's Adviser on Spiritual Formation, whose patterns for worship at the re-constituted diocesan Synod have been so challenging and stimulating, might produce a cycle of prayers to encourage mission at individual, parish, deanery and diocesan level. We believe that all future diocesan strategy needs to be founded on, and sustained by, prayer and a willingness for all to wait upon God.

THE CATHEDRAL AND THE DIOCESE

The Group has been made increasingly aware, during its discussions, of the considerable talents which exist within the diocese, but which are not necessarily widely appreciated. We have noted particularly the success of the Cathedral exhibitions, which celebrated 125 years of the diocese; during that time it was apparent that many parishes had little knowledge or appreciation of the Cathedral, and this was a cause of concern both to parishes and the Chapter. We hope that any future diocesan strategy would seek to ensure that the Cathedral ceases to have the somewhat 'detached' relationship with the diocese, which has existed in the past. Increasingly the Cathedral needs to see itself as a 'shop-window' for the many positive elements of Christian outreach, not only in the City, but also across the diocese. We urge the

Cathedral, in its developing role, to become a diocesan resource for practical action and a venue for reflection and challenge. We believe that the Cathedral needs to become an integral part of the training and development strategy, and that the considerable gifts of the Chapter should become more widely known and available to the diocese. We hope that Chapter will continue actively to foster relationships with the parishes, keeping them informed of its own progress in outreach and mission.

The Cathedral-based opportunities for celebration which have become a mark of diocesan life in the past ten years, have done much to encourage parishes and individuals. They have been opportunities to begin to break down the relative isolation of the Cathedral from diocesan life, increasingly recognised by Chapter. The Group hopes that the Cathedral occasions for diocesan celebration will continue, with a sharpened focus on all aspects of mission, ministry and achievement, increasing our awareness of the growth of the Church, and waiting expectantly upon God.

The Group regrets that time did not permit to discuss with the Chapter and the Chief Executive at the Cathedral, Mr Richard Glover, plans for the development of The Cathedral Quarter, to be launched during 2006. We believe that there should be closer integration between the diocesan administration, the Bishop's staff and the Chapter, having particular consideration to the enormous potential of the substantial Christian presence in the heart of the city, in the central area encompassed by the Cathedral, the former Choir School buildings and the Methodist Church. We particularly commend a more regular and active forum for a two way exchange of thinking between the Cathedral and the diocesan leadership.

THE BISHOP'S STAFF

The Group has become aware of some misunderstandings within the diocese relating to the role of the Bishop's Staff. Changes in diocesan structures have naturally impinged upon the staff who have been closely involved, at one level, as instruments of change. However, it would be a mistake to view the Bishop's Staff as primarily concerned with management. The increasing pastoral role of the Archdeacons, and the demands upon the time and energies of both Bishops, and to a different extent, the Dean, mean that they too, as individuals, are subject to many of the same stresses which concern the clergy. The Diocesan Secretary enjoys, as her predecessors have done, a unique role within the staff – as the only lay member. The Group feels that it would be helpful both to the diocese and to the Bishop's Staff if the decision-making group could be widened, within the spirit of the People of God, to enable mission to be better advanced.

EDUCATION

Any future strategy will need to keep under review the diocese's substantial commitment to Christian education. This becomes more important, as public interest in, and criticism of, faith schools increases. The Group welcomes the excellence of the commitment to primary education; the development and replacement of older Church Schools, and the leadership offered by the Director of Education, Mr Julian Pykett, whose wealth of experience both within the Local Authority and the diocese has enabled the church to continue to develop the good relations which exist between the church and the LEA. We regret that constraints of time have not enabled us to review the future strategy of the Board of Education. It is the Group's view that such a detailed review needs to take place within the next twelve months.

We also wish to record the excellent work being done with young people by Mrs Jacque Price, the Diocesan Youth Officer, and Mrs Shelley Porter, the Diocesan Children's Adviser and the innovative approach of the Revd Sian Yates, the Religious Education Adviser. We hope that opportunities will be found to provide them with continuing encouragement and resources.

UMBRELLA GROUPS

The revised diocesan structure includes three significant 'umbrella groups', responsible for Education, Formation and Proclamation. Much innovative, imaginative work is already being done by the Proclamation Group, thanks largely to the energy and imagination of the Social Responsibility Officer, the Revd Andrew Yates. The Social Responsibility profile rose sharply during Allan Chesney's time not only within the county, but with grant-making bodies outside it, and it is encouraging to see that imaginative approach to work within deaneries and parishes continuing as a means of being a channel of blessing to others. There is also some evidence of interchange of ideas between the Proclamation Group and the Formation Group whose responsibility includes all aspects of ministerial training, and we hope that this will continue and be strengthened. There are however, increasing concerns that the Education Group, the third 'arm', whose remit is solely education, is in danger of becoming isolated from the thinking within other diocesan structures, even where they pertain to aspects of education, and it is to be hoped that this will be addressed by the review of the work of the Diocesan Board of Education suggested above.

YOUNG PEOPLE

A view frequently expressed is that 'the Church should do more for the young'. Often this means little more than a wish that there were more children in our churches. We are not convinced that the immediate point for potential growth lies with young people, but rather with the generation between existing

churchgoers and those currently under 21. The age profile of the county shows a steep increase, in the next seven years, of those of retirement age. It is questionable whether a University in Cornwall will retain Cornish young people into adulthood, and statistically the birth rate continues to fall. Growth in church attendance across the Church in England is identified largely as happening from the age group 35-45 : it is they who swell Alpha and Emmaus courses. For the most part such people have young children, and are prepared to spend time, energy and money on providing what they consider is best for their children. Many 'growing' churches have shown that where the young parent generation feels a sense of belonging within a church community, provision for children and young people naturally follows.

There is little evidence to show that such a position has yet been reached in Cornwall. Those who wish to see the Church transformed to become a channel of blessing to others, who are offering for training are to be found amongst the over 50s, but few in the 30-50 age group. We feel that the future development of the Learning Mosaic and similar courses, should deliberately target this latter age group, with a view to making better provision for young people against the background of home, or family, nurture.

We recognise that there will be those who feel that a future strategy which does not immediately target young people is not concerned about the future of the church. There is little current evidence, however, from other dioceses that any successful strategy for encouraging young people presently exists. We would hope that those actively concerned with education, young people and social responsibility will continue to explore ideas and programmes for growth and development, as part of their commitment.

We recognise that there are areas of diocesan life which we have not had the opportunity to consider in any depth; we hope that the Bishop will wish to look further at some of those areas, especially the diocesan commitment to education and young people, and to issues of social concern.

A WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE

Over the past year, we have been offered considerable evidence of potential, development, and innovative thinking. At the same time we have been introduced to islands of loneliness, anxiety and despair. Overall, the Group has been encouraged by an awakening awareness that the Church is not in terminal decline, but that it is moving off a plateau of maintenance to a position where there are more who wish to engage in growth than in decline. 'Mission' is not always the name by which desire for transformation is identified, but it is becoming increasingly apparent that there are many within the parishes who

feel called to become more active as the People of God. That concept itself signifies a willingness to change.

The next phase of the People of God initiative will take place during the life of Cornwall's own Community Strategy Plan which will itself bring about far-reaching change in the life of the county. If we are to set our task as 'becoming a channel of blessing to others' then our transformation will be a part of the transformation of Cornwall. It is essential then, that the priorities we set ourselves are confident and achievable, and they need to be achieved. We recommend that the Executive establishes an Implementation Group whose task will be to help the diocese, deaneries and parishes meet the goals they are setting and report progress to the Executive.

The Church needs to be transformed, but not to change simply for the sake of change, but rather in response to the promptings of God, and the needs of the communities which it seeks to serve. This transformation will not come about in any meaningful way unless individuals and parishes, deaneries and diocese are prepared to open their hearts and minds to God and the prompting of his Spirit. We are encouraged by what we have heard and seen to believe that the ground is being well prepared, that the People of God may indeed become a channel of blessing to others.

December 2004 (Revised May 2005)

Jeremy Dowling

***All statistical information in this Report is based on information available in November 2004*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report approved by the Executive and presented to Diocesan Synod included a number of recommendations for action, some of which were a continuation of work already being undertaken within the Diocese and some of which needed fairly immediate action; these have since been started. Indeed the original report of the Strategy group recommended that further discussions be undertaken in certain areas of Diocesan life, and in many cases these have already started. For ease of understanding, all recommendations below, relating to work already in progress, have now been grouped together. *The numbering of the recommendations therefore differs from that which was approved by Synod.*

The Executive appointed an Implementation Group to oversee this work and the progress of the diocesan strategy, to assist further implementation where the Executive agreed it is necessary, and to report from time to time to the Executive. Other recommendations can wait for comments received from the parishes during the consultation process.

Even in respect of those recommendations which are in the process of being implemented, comments are invited on their part in the overall strategy of the Diocese for the next 5 to 10 years.

Recommendations in progress:

1. Selection procedures for Local Pastoral Ministers are being co-ordinated, to ensure a uniform standard of selection.
2. Specific modules to attract the under 40s to Local Pastoral Ministry are being developed.
3. The structure of the Mission and Ministry department of the Diocese is in process of being revised. Early discussions will take place between the new Warden of Readers, when appointed, the Director of Training and Development, (who will have responsibility for co-ordinating Reader Training) and others responsible for ministerial training and development, to encourage better liaison in the future.
4. The new structure of the Mission and Ministry department will enable all those responsible for the delivery of ministerial education, including Continuing Ministerial Education, Local Pastoral Ministry and Reader training, to meet regularly to and collaborate closely in the production

and dissemination of their training programmes, which will increasingly be shared.

5. A Working Party has been set up to examine the future role of the deaneries, with particular reference to the role, responsibilities and relationship with the Bishop of both the Rural Dean, and the synodically elected Lay Chairman. This group, under the Chairmanship of Gp Capt Paul Terrett, Chairman of the Board of Finance, will report its initial findings to the Executive in the autumn of 2005.
6. In the autumn, all parishes will be encouraged to conduct a community audit, to be overseen and devised by a group headed by the Director of Training and Development, over the following eighteen months.
7. The *Learning Mosaic* modules are being developed, to encourage existing Local Pastoral Ministers to develop more advanced skills.
8. The Bishop has seconded the Revd David White, Vicar of St Austell, as part-time Diocesan Director of Mission. He will work closely with those responsible for training and development, building on the progress already made under the People of God initiative.

Other Recommendations:

9. Further consideration should be given to the potential deployment of Local Pastoral Ministers within clusters of parishes, or across deaneries.
10. Liturgy and action should emphasise, at the point of commissioning, the pastoral links between the Bishop and Local Pastoral Ministers.
11. A Cathedral celebration, which would include training elements, should be held annually to affirm all forms of collaborative ministry.
12. Opportunities should be developed within deaneries and parishes to encourage interaction between the churches and the communities which they serve, outside the context of worship.
13. The diocese should respond to the perceived future training and support needs of the clergy, as expressed through their Reflection Days, with the human and financial resources which the Executive determines.

14. Urgent consideration should be given to the better integration of training for Readers and Local Pastoral Ministers.
15. The future provision of Continuing Ministerial Education should be carefully considered in the light of the response to the clergy Reflection Days.
16. Training for all the People of God should retain a careful balance, so that clergy and laity can be equally supported as they explore their new patterns of ministry together.
17. Informal 'clusters' of parishes should continue to develop within deaneries over the next five years, to encourage the development of local ministry teams, and mission.
18. In the Covenant situation, both the Anglican and Methodist Churches should commit themselves to the practical outworking of the Covenant wherever timely, and ensure shared representation within all their appropriate committees.
19. The advice of professional external consultants should be sought to advise parishes in assessing the best possible future use of their buildings.
20. Serious consideration should be given to the identification, preservation and development of a number of 'sacred space' sites.
21. Community and external consultants audit Reports, would be received by the Executive in the autumn of 2007, and the Diocesan Synod would expect to debate their implications and the recommendations of the Executive in the spring of 2008.
22. In the light of changing patterns of worship, the Bishop should give further consideration to possible provision of services of Communion by extension.
23. The Diocese should seek to develop a strategy for growth which is based on the understanding that 'Mission is who we are'.
24. Cathedral services of Celebration should continue to be developed, with a sharpened focus on all aspects of mission, ministry and

achievement, increasing our awareness of the growth of the Church, and waiting expectantly upon God.

25. The Bishop's Adviser on Spiritual Formation should be commissioned to produce a cycle of prayers to encourage mission at individual, parish, deanery and diocesan level. All future diocesan strategy needs to be founded on, and sustained by, prayer and a willingness to wait upon God.
26. The considerable skills of the members of the Cathedral Chapter should be more available to the parishes. Chapter should continue actively to foster relationships with the diocese and the parishes, keeping them informed of its own continuing progress in outreach and mission, in tune with the People of God initiative.
27. A detailed review of the work of the Board of Education should take place within the next twelve months.
28. Further consideration should be given to the commitment of the diocese to the needs of young people, and to social issues.